

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 21-34 and 153-159 without prejudice. Please add new claims 173-214, shown below.

In accordance with the Revised Rules under 37 C.F.R. 1.121, please amend the claims as shown below. The claims shown below may be indicated as original, currently amended, previously amended, cancelled, previously cancelled, withdrawn, previously withdrawn, new, previously added, reinstated, previously reinstated, re-presented and/or allowed. In accordance with the Rules, the text of cancelled or withdrawn claims need not be presented.

Claims 1-20 (previously withdrawn)

21. (cancelled) A device for use in connection with a thermal transfer printer that includes first web means for moving a plurality of media samples from a supply of media samples as well as a printhead that prints information on a first surface of said plurality of media samples, said device comprising:

a second web means for temporarily removing the plurality of media samples from said first web means; and

means for attaching a value-adding device to a second surface of selected ones of said media samples after information has been printed on the first surface of said selected ones of said media samples.

22. (cancelled) The device of claim 21 wherein said value-adding devices comprise radio frequency identification integrated circuits adopted to make contact with an antenna structure on said media samples to form radio frequency identification transponders.

23. (cancelled) The device of claim 21 wherein said value-adding devices comprise radio frequency identification transponders.

24. (cancelled) The device of claim 23 further comprising means for verifying that at least some of said radio frequency identification transponders are operable.

25. (cancelled) The device of claim 24 further comprising means for causing a failure indicia to be printed on the first surface of each one of said media samples to which an inoperable radio frequency identification transponder is attached.

26. (cancelled) The device of claim 21 wherein a value-adding device is attached to less than all of said plurality of media samples.

27. (cancelled) The device of claim 21 wherein said media samples are selected from a group consisting of labels, tickets, tags, and cards.

28. (cancelled) A device for use in connection with a thermal transfer printer that includes a first web that allows a plurality of media samples to be moved from a supply of media samples as well as a printhead that prints information on a first surface of said plurality of media samples, said device comprising:

a second web that temporarily removes the plurality of media samples from said first web; and

an attachment mechanism that attaches a value-adding device to a second surface of selected ones of said media samples after information has been printed on the first surface of said selected ones of said media samples.

29. (cancelled) The device of claim 28 wherein said value-adding devices comprise radio frequency identification integrated circuits adopted to make contact with an antenna structure on said media samples to form radio frequency identification transponders.

30. (cancelled) The device of claim 28 wherein said value-adding devices comprise radio frequency identification transponders.

31. (cancelled) The device of claim 30 further comprising means for verifying that at least some of said radio frequency identification transponders are operable.

32. (cancelled) The device of claim 31 further comprising means for causing a failure indicia to be printed on the first surface of each one of said media samples to which an inoperable radio frequency identification transponder is attached.

33. (cancelled) The device of claim 28 wherein a value-adding device is attached to less than all of said plurality of media samples.

34. (cancelled) The device of claim 28 wherein said media samples are selected from a group consisting of labels, tickets, tags, and cards.

Claims 35-152 (previously withdrawn)

153. (cancelled) Apparatus for associating a selected element with a selected label, ticket, tag, card or other media, at least one of which element and media is adhesive-backed and carried on a carrier, comprising:

means for delaminating said one element or media from its carrier;

means for supporting said delaminated element or media;

means for bringing said supported element or media into a position contiguous with the other of said element or media; and

means for pressing said element and media together to cause adherence.

154. (cancelled) The apparatus of 153 wherein said means for pressing comprises a tamper.

155. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 154 wherein said tamper comprises:

a fast-acting solenoid;

a gas spring that is driven by said solenoid; and

a pressure-applying mechanism that is coupled to said gas spring and that defines a surface to press together said media and said element, said gas spring damping the fast action of said solenoid.

156. (cancelled) The apparatus of 136 wherein said means for supporting utilizes a vacuum, wherein said tamper is reciprocable, and wherein said tamper includes a bellows through which the vacuum is delivered to said supported element or media.

157. (cancelled) The apparatus of 136 wherein said supported media is adhesive backed, and wherein said apparatus includes means for relaminating said supported media.

158. (cancelled) The apparatus of 153 wherein said value-adding element is an RFID transponder, and wherein said apparatus includes means for programming or reprogramming the transponder.

159. (cancelled) The apparatus of 153 wherein said means for bringing includes means for reciprocating said selected element into said contiguity and then withdrawing to leave the element.

160. (allowed) For use in adhering a label, ticket, tag, card or other media to a value-adding element, one of which media and element have an exposed adhesive surface, a reciprocable tamping applicator mechanism comprising:

a fast-acting solenoid;

a gas spring that is driven by said solenoid; and

a pressure-applying mechanism that is coupled to said gas spring and that defines a surface that presses together the media and the element, said gas spring damping the fast action of said solenoid.

161. (allowed) The mechanism of claim 160 including a return spring that returns said

pressure-applying mechanism after a stroke by said solenoid.

162. (allowed) The mechanism of claim 161 further comprising a plenum containing said solenoid and said gas spring, as well as a bellows that is disposed between said plenum and said pressure-applying mechanism.

163. (allowed) The mechanism of claim 162 wherein said surface is perforated, and wherein said mechanism includes means coupled to said plenum for developing a vacuum in said plenum.

Claims 164-172 (previously withdrawn)

173. (new) An on-demand converting system configured to receive a plurality of labels, tickets, tags, cards or other media samples and a plurality of value-adding elements, said converting system responding to program-controlled variable application instructions custom-configured for each of selected first and second media samples, which direct the converting system to apply or not apply one or more value-adding elements from said plurality of elements to each of said selected first and second media samples.

174. (new) The system of claim 173 wherein said media samples are carried on a liner, and wherein said converting system separates said media samples from said liner before applying said value-adding element or elements.

175. (new) The system of claim 174 wherein said converting system laminates said liner on said media samples after applying said value adding element or elements.

176. (new) The system of claim 174 wherein said converting system includes a tamper.

177. (new) The system of claim 176 wherein said tamper develops a vacuum for retaining a separated media sample to be tamped.

178. (new) The system of claim 177 wherein said tamper includes a fast-acting solenoid driving a gas spring.

179. (new) The system of claim 174 wherein said media samples are die cut or otherwise singulated before being processed by said converting system.

180. (new) The system of claim 173 wherein said converting system applies a plurality of value adding elements to at least one media sample.

181. (new) The system of claim 173 wherein said converting system is configured to apply a value adding element at different prescribed locations on a media sample.

182. (new) The system of claim 173 wherein said value adding elements includes an encodable wireless RF transponder.

183. (new) The system of claim 182 configured to encode said transponder.

184. (new) The system of claim 183 configured to verify that an encoded transponder has been correctly encoded and is not defective.

185. (new) The system of claim 173 wherein the application instructions are received from a control arrangement situated at the site of the converting system or on a network with which the converting system is in communication.

186. (new) For use with an on-demand print device configured to receive a plurality of labels, tickets, tags, cards or other media samples, said print device responding to program-controlled variable print instructions custom-configured for each of selected first and second media samples, which direct the print device regarding whether to print and what to print on said selected first and second media samples, an on-demand converting system configured to receive said plurality of media samples before or after being printed by said print device and a plurality of value-adding elements, said converting system responding to program-controlled variable

application instructions custom-configured for each of said selected first and second media samples which direct the converting system to apply or not apply one or more value-adding elements from said plurality of elements to each of said selected first and second media samples.

187. (new) The system of claim 186 wherein the first and second media samples have been custom printed with variable information before a value adding element is applied by said converting system.

188. (new) The system of claim 186 wherein said first and second media samples have been custom printed with variable information after a value adding element is applied by said converting system.

189. (new) The system of claim 186 wherein said plurality of value adding elements include an encodable wireless RF transponder.

190. (new) The system of claim 189 configured to encode said transponder.

191. (new) The system of claim 190 wherein the transponder is encoded with information which at least in part corresponds to information printed on the associated media sample.

192. (new) The system of claim 191 configured to verify that an encoded transponder has been correctly encoded and is not defective.

193. (new) An applicator system for applying custom-configured media samples to objects, the system comprising:

an on-demand converting system configured to receive a plurality of labels, tickets, tags, cards or other media samples and a plurality of value-adding elements, said converting system responding to program-controlled variable application instructions custom-configured for each of selected first and second media samples, which direct the converting system to apply or not apply

one or more value-adding elements from said plurality of value adding elements to each of said selected first and second media samples; and

an applicator for applying one or more of said media samples to each of a plurality of objects intended to receive said one or more media samples.

194. (new) For use with an on-demand print device configured to receive a plurality of labels, tickets, tags, cards or other media samples, said print device responding to program-controlled variable print instructions custom-configured for each of selected first and second media samples, which direct the print device regarding whether to print and what to print on said selected first and second media samples, an applicator system for applying custom-configured media samples to objects, comprising:

an on-demand converting system configured to receive a plurality of labels, tickets, tags, cards or other media samples and a plurality of value-adding elements, said converting system responding to program-controlled variable application instructions custom-configured for each of said selected first and second media samples which direct the converting system to apply or not apply one or more value-adding elements from said plurality of value adding elements to each of said selected first and second media samples; and

an applicator for applying one or more of said media samples to objects intended to receive said one or more media samples.

195. (new) For use with an on-demand print device configured to receive a plurality of labels, tickets, tags, cards or other media samples, said print device responding to program-controlled variable print instructions custom-configured for each of selected first and second media samples, which direct the print device regarding whether to print and what to print on said selected first and second media samples, an on-demand converting system configured to receive

said plurality of media samples before or after being printed by said print device and a plurality of encodable wireless RF transponders or transponder components, said converting system responding to program-controlled variable application instructions custom-configured for each of said selected first and second media samples, which direct the converting system to apply or not apply one or more transponders or transponder components from said plurality of transponders or transponder components to each of said selected first and second media samples.

196. (new) The converting system of claim 195 wherein said application instructions include commands effective to cause plural transponders or transponder components to be applied to a selected media sample.

197. (new) The system of claim 195 configured to encode one or more transponders applied to at least one of said first and second media samples.

198. (new) The system of claim 197 wherein a transponder applied to said media sample is encoded with information which at least in part corresponds to information printed on the media sample.

199. (new) The system of claim 197 configured to verify that an encoded transponder has been correctly encoded and is not defective.

200. (new) The converting system of claim 195 comprising at least one of the following: 1) part of a printer; 2) a printer module or attachment; and 3) an applicator system for applying media samples to objects.

201. (new) The converting system of claim 195 wherein said media samples are die cut or otherwise singulated before being processed by said converting system.

202. (new) The system of claim 195 wherein said media samples are carried on a liner, and wherein said converting system separates said media samples from said liner before

applying said transponders.

203. (new) The system of claim 202 wherein said converting system laminates said liner on said media samples after applying said one or more transponders or transponder components.

204. (new) The system of claim 195 wherein said converting system includes a tamper.

205. (new) The system of claim 204 wherein said tamper develops a vacuum for retaining a separated media sample to be tamped.

206. (new) The system of claim 205 wherein said tamper includes a fast-acting solenoid driving a gas spring.

207. (new) The converting system of claim 195 wherein the application instructions and printing instructions are received from a common control arrangement situated at the site of the converting system or on a network with which the converting system is in communication.

208. (new) The converting system of claim 195 receiving media samples which have been separated from a liner, said converting system including a vacuum conveyor arranged to convey said samples in a direction orthogonal to the direction in which said converting system moves said transponders to join said media samples.

209. (new) The converting system of claim 195 receiving media samples which have been separated from a liner, said converting system including a vacuum conveyor arranged to convey said samples in a direction parallel to the direction in which said converting system moves said transponders to join said media samples.

210. (new) The converting system of claim 195 including:

a web conveyance configured to carry said first and second media samples from a supply

of media samples;

a media separator configured to separate at least one of said media samples from a supporting web; and

a dispenser adapted to receive said transponder and to couple a transponder to an exposed bottom surface area of said one media sample.

211. (new) The converting system of claim 195 wherein said one or more transponders or transponder components comprises a chipless transponder.

212. (new) The converting system of claim 211 wherein said chipless transponder comprises a resonant series of conductive lines.

213. (new) The converting system of claim 212 wherein said conductive lines are printed.

214. (new) The converting system of claim 195 wherein at least one of said one or more transponders or transponder components comprises an integrated circuit which is applied to an antenna previously formed on the media sample to create a wireless RF transponder in situ.